

Speech of Frederick Douglass

Haitian Pavilion Dedication Ceremonies

At Chicago World Fair, 1893

* Lecture on Haiti, Delivered at the World's Fair, in Jackson Park, Chicago, Jan. 2, 1893, by the HON. FREDERICK DOUGLASS, Ex-Minister to Haiti

* Introductory by Prof. David Swing

* Response of the Director General, George R. Davis, of the World's Fair

Much has been said of the savage and sanguinary character of the warfare waged by the Haitians against their masters and against the invaders sent from France by Bonaparte with the purpose to enslave them; but impartial history records the fact that every act of blood and torture committed by the Haitians during that war was more than duplicated by the French. The revolutionists did only what was essential to success in gaining their freedom and independence and what any other people assailed by such an enemy for such a purpose would have done.
[Applause]—Frederick Douglass

Frederick Douglass was a renowned U.S. abolitionist and United States ambassador to Haiti, 1889-1891. He resigned in protest over belligerent U.S. policy to Haiti. This document, with links and references, available at:

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PREFACE

The following lecture on Haiti was delivered in America for the purpose of demonstrating the fact to the United States that the Haitians are people like ourselves; that what they have gained they will maintain; that whatever concessions may be asked by man, woman or child, if not conflicting with the constitution of their country, they will without hesitation grant. The fact that their skin is dark and that what supremacy they now have was gained by bloodshed, is no reason why they should be looked upon and treated as though they were unable to comprehend those things, which are to their best interests. The course taken by their progenitors to obtain freedom is in no manner different from that pursued by the original promoters of American independence.

Our paths are strewn with the bones of our victims. For whatever United States, the good people of this country will be held responsible. We ask you to read and judge well. The appointment of Mr. Douglass to represent this country in Haiti was bitterly opposed by millions of Americans, but in spite of all opposition he went, and since his return and the success of his mission made public, his assailants and opposers have repented of their error and their respect and administration for him and for those who sent him is greater now than ever before. So far as he was concerned his services were rendered according to the opinion of the good people and the constitution of the United States. We hope the President will ever be successful in appointing another such minister to represent the United States in Haiti.

GEO. Washington, Manager
April, 1893

INTRODUCTORY

The oration here offered to the public is made interesting by not only its subject but also by its author. The interesting Island finds a rival in the impressive orator, and the reading heart will find itself divided between Haiti and Frederick Douglass. The History of either, the Island or the man, would yield thought enough for the hour. It seems a surplus of riches when such a heroic nation is spread out before us by such a man!

Frederick Douglass in his hours of remembrance must look out upon an amazing group of years. he was just learning to read when Henry Clay was in full fame as an orator and when Daniel Webster was a young man in the National Senate. He was a slave-boy when those two orators were the giants of freedom; he was an African while they were Americans, and yet in intellectual power and in eloquence the slave and the two freeman were at last to meet. It was the destiny of the slave to behold a liberty far nobler than that freedom which lay around Clay and Webster when their sun of life went down. It was the still better destiny of the slave-lad to live and labor in all those years which wrought out slowly and at great cost the emancipation of our African citizens. His talents, his courage, his oratory were given to those days which exposed, assailed and destroyed a great infamy.

By the time Frederick had reached his tenth year he had learned to read. With reading, observation and reflection, came some true measurements of human rights and hopes, and when

the twenty-first year had come with its reminder of an independent manhood, this slave made his secret journey toward the North and exchanged Maryland for Massachusetts. Ten years afterward, some English abolitionists paid the Baltimore master for his literary and eloquent fugitive, and thus secured for the famous orator a freedom, not only actual, but legal according to statute law.

Although Frederick Douglass has lived in our land three-fourths of a century, yet many have not heard the voice which once impressed not only America but also all of England. His style is simple. The meaning of his sentences comes instantly. His logic is always like that of plain geometry. It is built up out of solid promises and he reaches conclusions not for arts sake, or for pay-sake, but simply because they are inevitable. In the olden time when he spoke on the slave question and on the duties of the Nation, the audience felt as though they had been pounded with artillery. He was not noisy, nor tremendous in gesture, his power being like that of Theodore Parker and Phillips--the power of thought. The reader of this lecture on Haiti will note at once that simplicity, that clearness, that pathos, that breadth, that sarcasm which are the characteristics of a great orator. In the power of making a statement, Mr. Douglass resembles Webster. The words all rise up as the statement advances, and the listener asks for no omission or addition of a term. If we select one sentence, from that one we may judge all.

"Until Haiti spoke the slave ship, followed by hungry sharks, greedy to devour the dead and dying slaves flung overboard to feed them, ploughed in peace the South Atlantic, painting the sea with the Negro's blood."

Such a style, so just, so full, so clear, was the form of utterance well fitted for the black years between 1830 and 1861.

This oration should not be for any of us a piece of eloquence only, full of present beauty and of great memories, but it may well take its place as a great open-letter full to overflowing with lessons for the present and the future. It is the paper of an old statesman read to an army of youth who are here to enjoy and to bless the land which the old orators once made and afterward saved and refashioned.

David Swing
Chicago, March 20th, 1893

LECTURE ON HAITI

Fifteen hundred of the best citizens of Chicago assembled January 2, 1893, in Quinn Chapel, to listen to the following lecture by Honorable Frederick Douglass, ex-United States Minister to the Republic of Haiti. In beginning his address, Mr. Douglass said: "No man should presume to come before an intelligent American audience without a commanding object and an earnest purpose. In whatever else I may be deficient, I hope I am qualified, both in object and purpose, to speak to you this evening."

My subject is Haiti, the Black Republic; the only self-made Black Republic in the world. I am to speak to you of her character, her history, her importance and her struggle from slavery to

freedom and to statehood. I am to speak to you of her progress in the line of civilization; of her relation with the United States; of her past and present; of her probable destiny; and of the bearing of her example as a free and independent Republic, upon what may be the destiny of the African race in our own country and elsewhere.

If, by a true statement of facts and a fair deduction from them, I shall in any degree promote a better understanding of what Haiti is, and create a higher appreciation of her merits and services to the world; and especially, if I can promote a more friendly feeling for her in this country and at the same time give to Haiti herself a friendly hint as to what is hopefully and justly expected of her by her friends, and by the civilized world, my object and purpose will have been accomplished.

There are many reasons why a good understanding should exist between Haiti and the United States. Her proximity; her similar government and her large and increasing commerce with us, should alone make us deeply interested in her welfare, her history, her progress and her possible destiny.

Haiti is a rich country. She has many things which we need and we have many things which she needs. Intercourse between us is easy. Measuring distance by time and improved steam navigation, Haiti will one day be only three days from New York and thirty-six hours from Florida; in fact our next door neighbor. On this account, as well as others equally important, friendly and helpful relations should subsist between the two countries. Though we have a thousand years of civilization behind us, and Haiti only a century behind her; though we are large and Haiti is small; though we are strong and Haiti is weak; though we are a continent and Haiti is bounded on all sides by the sea, there may come a time when even in the weakness of Haiti there may be strength to the United States.

Now, notwithstanding this plain possibility, it is a remarkable and lamentable fact, that while Haiti is so near us and so capable of being so serviceable to us; while, like us, she is trying to be a sister republic and anxious to have a government of the people, by the people and for the people; while she is one of our very best customers, selling her coffee and her other valuable products to Europe for gold, and sending us her gold to buy our flour, our fish, our oil, our beef and our pork; while she is thus enriching our merchants and our farmers and our country generally, she is the one country to which we turn the cold shoulder.

We charge her with being more friendly to France and to other European countries than to ourselves. This charge, if true, has a natural explanation, and the fault is more with us than with Haiti. No man can point to any act of ours to win the respect and friendship of this black republic. If, as is alleged, Haiti is more cordial to France than to the United States, it is partly because Haiti is herself French. Her language is French; her literature is French, her manners and fashions are French; her ambitions and aspirations are French; her laws and methods of government are French; her priesthood and her education are French; her children are sent to school in France and their minds are filled with French ideas and French glory.

But a deeper reason for coolness between the countries is this: Haiti is black, and we have not yet forgiven Haiti for being black [applause] or forgiven the Almighty for making her black. [Applause.] In this enlightened act of repentance and forgiveness, our boasted civilization is far behind all other nations. [Applause.] In every other country on the globe a citizen of Haiti is sure

of civil treatment. [Applause.] In every other nation his manhood is recognized and respected. [Applause.] Wherever any man can go, he can go. [Applause.] He is not repulsed, excluded or insulted because of his color. [Applause.] All places of amusement and instruction are open to him. [Applause.] Vastly different is the case with him when he ventures within the border of the United States. [Applause.] Besides, after Haiti had shaken off the fetters of bondage, and long after her freedom and independence had been recognized by all other civilized nations, we continued to refuse to acknowledge the fact and treated her as outside the sisterhood of nations.

No people would be likely soon to forget such treatment and fail to resent it in one form or another. [Applause.] Not to do so would justly invite contempt.

In the nature of the country itself there is much to inspire its people with manliness, courage and self-respect. In its typography it is wonderfully beautiful, grand and impressive. Clothed in its blue and balmy atmosphere it rises from the surrounding sea in surpassing splendor. In describing the grandeur and sublimity of this country, the Haitian may well enough adopt the poetic description of our own proud country: [Applause.]

A land of forests and of rock,
Of deep blue sea and mighty river,
Of mountains reared aloft to mock,
The thunder shock, the lightning's quiver;
My own green land forever.

It is a land strikingly beautiful, diversified by mountains, valleys, lakes, rivers and plains, and contains in itself all the elements of great and enduring wealth. Its limestone formation and foundation are a guarantee of perpetual fertility. Its tropical heat and insular moisture keep its vegetation fresh, green and vigorous all the year round. At an altitude of eight thousand feet, its mountains are still covered with woods of great variety and of great value. Its climate, varying with altitude like that of California, is adapted to all constitutions and productions.

Fortunate in its climate and soil, it is equally fortunate in its adaptation to commerce. Its shore line is marked with numerous indentations of inlets, rivers, bays and harbors, where every grade of vessel may anchor in safety. Bulwarked on either side by lofty mountains rich with tropical verdure from base to summit, its blue waters dotted here and there with the white wings of commerce from every land and sea, the Bay of Port au Prince almost rivals the far-famed Bay of Naples, the most beautiful in the world.

One of these bays has attracted the eyes of American statesmanship. The Mole St. Nicolas of which we have heard much and may hear much more, is a splendid harbor. It is properly styled the Gibraltar of that country. It commands the Windward Passage, the natural gateway of the commerce both of the new and old world. Important now, our statesmanship sees that it will be still more important when the Nicaragua Canal shall be completed. Hence we want this harbor for a naval station. It is seen that the nation that can get it and hold it will be master of the land and sea in its neighborhood. Some rash things have been said by Americans about getting possession of this harbor. [Applause.] We are to have it peaceably, if we can, forcibly, if we must. I hardly think we shall get it by either process, [Applause.] for the reason that Haiti will not surrender peacefully, and it would cost altogether too much to wrest it from her by force. [Applause.] I thought in my simplicity when Minister and Council General to Haiti, that she might as an act of

comity, make this concession to the United States, but I soon found that the judgment of the American Minister was not the judgment of Haiti. Until I made the effort to obtain it I did not know the strength and vigor of the sentiment by which it would be withheld. [Applause.] Haiti has no repugnance to losing control over a single inch of her territory. [Applause.] No statesman in Haiti would dare to disregard this sentiment. It could not be done by any government without costing the country revolution and bloodshed. [Applause.] I did not believe that President Harrison wished me to press the matter to any such issue. [Applause.] On the contrary, I believe as a friend to the colored race he desired peace in that country. [Applause.]

The attempt to create angry feeling in the United States against Haiti because she thought proper to refuse us the Mole St. Nicolas, is neither reasonable nor creditable. There was no insult or broken faith in the case. Haiti has the same right to refuse that we had to ask, and there was insult neither in the asking nor in the refusal. [Applause.]

Neither the commercial, geographical or numerical importance of Haiti is to be despised. [Applause.] If she wants much from the world, the world wants much that she possesses. [Applause.] She produces coffee, cotton, log-wood, mahogany and lignum-vitae. The revenue realized by the government from these products is between nine and ten millions of dollars. With such an income, if Haiti could be kept free from revolutions, she might easily become, in proportion to her territory and population, the richest country in the world. [Applause.] And yet she is comparatively poor, not because she is revolutionary.

The population of Haiti is estimated to be nearly one million. I think the actual number exceeds this estimate. In the towns and cities of the country the people are largely of mixed blood and range all the way from black to white. But the people of the interior are of pure negro blood. The prevailing color among them is a dark brown with a dash of chocolate in it. They are in many respects a fine looking people. There is about them a sort of majesty. They carry themselves proudly erect as if conscious of their freedom and independence. [Applause.] I thought the women quite superior to the men. They are elastic, vigorous and comely. They move with the step of a blooded horse. The industry, wealth and prosperity of the country depends largely upon them. [Applause.] They supply the towns and cities of Haiti with provisions, bringing them from distances of fifteen and twenty miles, and they often bear an additional burden in the shape of a baby. This baby burden is curiously tied to the sides of the mother. They seem to think nothing of their burden, the length of the journey or the added weight of the baby. Thousands of these country women in their plain blue gowns and many colored turbans, every morning line the roads leading into Port au Prince. The spectacle is decidedly striking and picturesque. Much of the marketing is also brought down from the mountains on donkeys, mules, small horses and horned cattle. In the management of these animals we see in Haiti a cruelty inherited from the old slave system. They often beat them unmercifully.

I HAVE SAID THAT THE MEN did not strike me as equal to the women, and I think that this is largely due to the fact that most of the men are compelled to spend much of their lives as soldiers in the service of their country, and this is a life often fatal to the growth of all manly qualities. Every third man you meet within the streets of Port au Prince is a soldier. His vocation is unnatural. He is separated from home and industry. He is tempted to spend much of his time in gambling, drinking and other destructive vices; vices which never fail to show themselves repulsively in the manners and forms of those addicted to them. As I walked through the streets

of Port au Prince and saw these marred, shattered and unmanly men, I found myself taking up over Haiti the lament of Jesus over Jerusalem, and saying to myself, "Haiti! Poor Haiti! When will she learn and practice the things that make for her peace and happiness?"

NO OTHER LAND HAS BRIGHTER SKIES. No other land has purer water, richer soil, or a more happily diversified climate. She has all the natural conditions essential to a noble, prosperous and happy country. [Applause.] Yet, there she is, torn and rent by revolutions, by clamorous factions and anarchies; floundering her life away from year in a labyrinth of social misery. Every little while we find her convulsed by civil war, engaged in the terrible work of death; frantically shedding her own blood and driving her best mental material into hopeless exile. Port au Prince, a city of sixty thousand souls, and capable of being made one of the healthiest, happiest and one of the most beautiful cities of the West Indies, has been destroyed by fire once in each twenty-five years of its history. The explanation is this: Haiti is a country of revolutions. They break forth without warning and without excuse. The town may stand at sunset and vanish in the morning. Splendid ruins, once the homes of the rich, meet us on every street. Great warehouses, once the property of successful merchants, confront us with their marred and shattered walls in different parts of the city. When we ask: "Whence these mournful ruins?" and "Why are they not rebuilt?" we are answered by one word-- a word of agony and dismal terror, a word which goes to the core of all this people's woes; It is, "revolution!" Such are the uncertainties and insecurities caused by this revolutionary madness of a part of her people, that no insurance company will insure property at a rate which the holder can afford to pay. Under such a condition of things a tranquil mind is impossible. There is ever a chronic, feverish looking forward to possible disasters. Incendiary fires; fires set on foot as a proof of dissatisfaction with the government; fires for personal revenge, and fires to promote revolution are of startling frequency. This is sometimes thought to be due to the character of the race. Far from it. [Applause.] The common people of Haiti are peaceful enough. They have no taste for revolutions. The fault is not with the ignorant many, but with the educated and ambitious few. Too proud to work, and not disposed to go into commerce, they make politics a business of their country. Governed neither by love nor mercy for their country, they care not into what depths she may be plunged. No president, however virtuous, wise and patriotic, ever suits them when they themselves happen to be out of power.

I wish I could say that these are the only conspirators against the peace of Haiti, but I cannot. They have allies in the United States. Recent developments have shown that even a former United States Minister, resident and Consul General to that country has considered against the present government of Haiti. It so happens that we have men in this country who, to accomplish their personal and selfish ends, will fan the flame of passion between the factions in Haiti and will otherwise assist in setting revolutions afoot. To their shame be it spoken, men in high American quarters have boasted to me of their ability to start a revolution in Haiti at pleasure. They have only to raise sufficient money, they say, with which to arm and otherwise equip the malcontents, of either faction, to effect their object. Men who have old munitions of war or old ships to sell; ships that will go down in the first storm, have an interest in stirring up strife in Haiti. It gives them a market for their worthless wares. Others of a speculative turn of mind and who have money to lend at high rates of interest are glad to conspire with revolutionary chiefs of either faction, to enable them to start a bloody insurrection. To them, the welfare of Haiti is nothing; the shedding of human blood is nothing; the success of free institutions is nothing, and

the ruin of neighboring country is nothing. They are sharks, pirates and Shylocks, greedy for money, no matter at what cost of life and misery to mankind.

It is the opinion of many, and it is mine as well, that these revolutions would be less frequent if there were less impunity afforded the leaders of them. The so-called right of asylum is extended to them. This right is merciful to the few, but cruel to the many. While these crafty plotters of mischief fail in their revolutionary attempts, they can escape the consequences of their treason and rebellion by running into the foreign legations and consulates. Once within the walls of these, the right of asylum prevails and they know that they are safe from pursuit and will be permitted to leave the country without bodily harm. If I were a citizen of Haiti, I would do all I could to abolish this right of Asylum. During the late trouble at Port au Prince, I had under the protection of the American flag twenty of the insurgents who, after doing their mischief, were all safely embarked to Kingston without punishment, and since then have again plotted against the peace of their country. The strange thing is, that neither the government nor the rebels are in favor of the abolition of this so-called right of asylum, because the fortunes of war may at some time make it convenient to the one or the other of them to find such shelter.

Manifestly, this revolutionary spirit of Haiti is her curse, her crime, her greatest calamity and the explanation of the limited condition of her civilization. It makes her an object of distress to her friends at home and abroad. It reflects upon the colored race everywhere. Many who would have gladly believed in her ability to govern herself wisely and successfully are compelled at times to bow their heads in doubt and despair. Certain it is that while this evil spirit shall prevail, Haiti cannot rise very high in the scale of civilization. While this shall prevail, ignorance and superstition will flourish and no good thing can grow and prosper within her borders. While this shall prevail, she will resemble the man cutting himself among the tombs. While this shall prevail, her rich and fruitful soil will bring forth briers, thorns and noxious weeds. While this evil spirit shall prevail, her great natural wealth will be wasted and her splendid possibilities will be blasted. While this spirit shall prevail, she will sadden the hearts of her friends and rejoice the hearts of her enemies. While this spirit of turbulence shall prevail, confidence in her public men will be weakened, and her well-won independence will be threatened. Schemes of aggression and foreign protectorates will be invented. While this evil spirit shall prevail, faith in the value and stability of her institutions, so essential to the happiness and well-being of her people, will vanish. While it shall prevail, the arm of her industry will be paralyzed, the spirit of enterprise will languish, national opportunities will be neglected, the means of education will be limited the ardor of patriotism will be quenched, her national glory will be tarnished, and her hopes and the hopes of her friends will be blighted.

In its presence, commerce is interrupted, progress halts, streams go unbridged, highways go unrepaired, streets go unpaved, cities go unlighted, filth accumulates in her market places, evil smells affront the air, and disease and pestilence are invited to their work of sorrow, pain and death.

Port au Prince should be one of the finest cities in the world. There is no natural cause for its present condition. No city in the world is by nature more easily drained of impurities and kept clean. The land slopes to the water's edge, and pure sparkling mountain streams flow through its streets on their way to the sea. With peace firmly established within her borders, this city might

be as healthy as New York, and Haiti might easily lead all the other islands of the Caribbean Sea in the race of civilization.

You will ask me about the President of Haiti. I will tell you. Whatever may be said or thought of him to the contrary I affirm that there is no man in Haiti, who more fully understands or more deeply feels the need of peace in his country than does President Hyppolite. No purer patriot ever ruled the country. His administration, from the first to the last, has had the welfare of his country in view. It is against the fierce revolutionary spirit of a part of his countrymen that he has had to constantly watch and contend. It has met him more fiercely at the seat of his government than elsewhere.

Unhappily, his countrymen are not his only detractors. Though a friend and benefactor of his country, and though bravely battling against conspiracy, treason and rebellion, instead of receiving the sympathy and support of the American Press and people, this man has been denounced as a cruel monster. I declare to you, than this, no judgment of President Hyppolite could be more unjust and more undeserved.

I know him well and have studied his character with care, and no man can look into his thoughtful face and hear his friendly voice without feeling that he is in the presence of a kind hearted man. The picture of him in the New York papers, which some of you have doubtless seen, does him no manner of justice, and, in fact, does him startling injustice. It makes him appear like a brute, while he is in truth a fine looking man, "black, but comely." His features are regular, his bearing dignified, his manner polished, and he makes for himself the impression of a gentleman and a scholar. His conduct during the recent troubles in Haiti was indeed, prompt, stern and severe, but, in the judgment of the most thoughtful and patriotic citizens of that country, it was not more stringent than the nature of the case required. Here, as elsewhere, desperate cases require desperate remedies. Governments must be a terror to evil-doers if they would be praised to those who do well. It will no do for a government with the knife of treason at its throat, to bear the sword in vain. [Applause.]

I invoke for the President of Haiti the charity and justice we once demanded for our President. Like Abraham Lincoln, President Hyppolite was duly elected President of Haiti and took the oath of office prescribed by his country, and when treason and rebellion raised their destructive heads, he like Mr. Lincoln, struck them down otherwise he would have been struck down by them. [Applause.] Hyppolite did the same. If one should be commended for his patriotism, so should the other. While representing the United States in Haiti, I was repeatedly charged in certain quarters, with being a friend to Haiti. I am not ashamed of that charge. I own at once, that the charge is true, and I would be ashamed to have it otherwise than true. I am indeed a friend to Haiti, but not in the sense my accusers would have you believe. They would have it that I preferred the interest of Haiti, to the just claims of my own country, and this charge I utterly deny and defy any man to prove it. I am a friend of Haiti and a friend of every other people upon whom the yoke of slavery had been imposed. In this I only stand with philanthropic men and women everywhere. I am the friend of Haiti in the same sense in which General Harrison, the President of the United States, himself is a friend of Haiti. I am glad to be able to say here and now of him, that I found in President Harrison no trace of the vulgar prejudice which is just now so malignant in some parts of our southern country towards the negro. He sent me not to represent in Haiti our race prejudice, but the best sentiments of our loyal, liberty-loving American

people. No mean or mercenary mission was set before me. His advice to me was worthy of his lofty character. He authorized me in substance to do all that I could consistently with my duty to the United States, for the welfare of Haiti and, as far as I could, to persuade her to value and preserve her free institutions, and to remove all ground for the reproaches now hurled at her and at the colored race through her example.

The language of the President was worthy of the chief magistrate of the American people--a people who should be too generous to profit by the misfortune of others; too proud to stoop to meanness; too honest to practice duplicity; too strong to menace the weak, and every way too great to be small. I went to Haiti, imbued with the noble sentiments of General Harrison. For this reason, with others, I named him as worthy to be his own successor, and I could have named no other more worthy of the honor.

From the beginning of our century until now, Haiti and its inhabitants under one aspect or another, have, for various reasons, been very much in the thoughts of the American people. While slavery existed amongst us, her example was a sharp thorn in our side and a source of alarm and terror. She came into the sisterhood of nations through blood. She was described at the time of her advent, as a very hell of horrors. Her very name was pronounced with a shudder. She was a startling and frightful surprise and a threat to all slave-holders throughout the world, and the slave-holding world has had its questioning eye upon her career ever since.

By reason of recent events and abolition of slavery, the enfranchisement of the negro in our country, and the probable completion of the Nicaragua canal, Haiti has under another aspect, become, of late, interesting to American statesmen. More thought, more ink and paper have been devoted to her than to all the other West India Islands put together. This interest is both political and commercial, for Haiti is increasingly important in both respects. But aside from politics and aside from commerce, there is, perhaps, no equal number of people anywhere on the globe, in whose history, character and destiny there is more to awaken sentiment, thought and inquiry, than is found in the history of her people.

The country itself, apart from its people, has special attractions. First things have ever had a peculiar and romantic interest, simply because they are first things. In this, Haiti is fortunate. She has in many things been first. She has been made the theatre of great events. She was the first of all the Atlantic world, upon which the firm foot of the progressive, aggressive and all-conquering white man was permanently set. Her grand old tropical forests, fields and mountains, were among the first of the New World to have their silence broken by trans-Atlantic song and speech. She was the first to be invaded by the Christian religion and to witness its forms and ordinances. She was the first to see a Christian church and to behold the cross of Christ. She was also the first to witness the bitter agonies of the negro bending under the blood-stained lash of Christian slave-holders. Happily too, for her, she was the first of the New World in which the black man asserted his right to be free and was brave enough to fight for his freedom and fortunate enough to gain it.

In thinking of Haiti, a painful, perplexing and contradictory fact meets us at the outset. It is: that negro slavery was brought to the New World by the same people from whom Haiti received her religion and her civilization. No people have ever shown greater religious zeal or have given more attention to the ordinances of the Christian church than have the Spaniards; yet no people were ever guilty of more injustice and blood-chilling cruelty to their fellowmen than these same

religious Spaniards. Men more learned in the theory of religion than I am, may be able to explain and reconcile these two facts; but to my they seem to prove that men may be very pious, and yet very pitiless; very religious and yet practice the foulest crimes. These Spanish Christians found in Haiti a million of harmless men and women, and in less than sixty years they had murdered nearly all of them. With religion on their lips, the tiger in their hearts and the slave whip in their hands, they lashed these innocent natives to toil, death and extinction. When these pious souls had destroyed the natives, they opened the slave trade with Africa as a merciful device. Such, at least, is the testimony of history.

Interesting as Haiti is in being the cradle in which American religion and civilization were first rocked, its present inhabitants are still more interesting as having been actors in great moral and social events. These have been scarcely less portentous and startling than the terrible earthquakes which have some times moved their mountains and shaken down their towns and cities. The conditions in which the Republican Government of Haiti originated, were peculiar. The great fact concerning its people, is, that they were negro slaves and by force conquered their masters and made themselves free and independent. As a people thus made free and having remained so for eighty-seven years, they are now asked to justify their assumption of statehood at the bar of the civilized world by conduct becoming a civilized nation.

The ethnologist observes them with curious eyes, and questions them on the ground of race. The statesman questions their ability to govern themselves; while the scholar and philanthropist are interested in their progress, their improvement and the question of their destiny.

But, interesting as they are to all these and to others, the people of Haiti, by reason of ancestral identity, are more interesting to the colored people of the United States than to all others, for the Negro, like the Jew, can never part with his identity and race. Color does for the one what religion does for the other and makes both distinct from the rest of mankind. No matter where prosperity or misfortune may chance to drive the negro, he is identified with and shares the fortune of his race. We are told to go to Haiti; to go to Africa. Neither Haiti nor Africa can save us from common doom. Whether we are here or there, we must rise or fall with the race. Hence, we can do about as much for Africa or Haiti by good conduct and success here as anywhere else in the world. The talk of the bettering ourselves by getting rid of the white race, is a great mistake. It is about as idle for the black man to think of getting rid of the white man, as it is for the white man to think of getting rid of the black. They are just the two races which cannot be excluded from any part of the globe, nor can they exclude each other; so we might as well decide to live together here as to go elsewhere. Besides, for obvious reasons, until we can make ourselves respected in the United States, we shall not be respected in Haiti, Africa, or anywhere else.

Of my regard and friendship for Haiti, I have already spoken. I have, too, already spoken somewhat of her faults, as well, for they are many and grievous. I shall, however, show before I get through, that, with all her faults, you and I and all of us have reason to respect Haiti for her services to the cause of liberty and human equality throughout the world, and for the noble qualities she exhibited in all the trying conditions of her early history.

I have, since my return to the United States, been pressed on all sides to foretell what will be the future of Haiti-whether she will ever master and subdue the turbulent elements within her borders and become an orderly Republic. Whether she will maintain her liberty and independence, or, at

last, part with both and become a subject of some one or another of the powerful nations of the world by which she seems to be coveted. The question still further is, whether she will fall away into anarchy, chaos and barbarism, or rise to the dignity and happiness of a highly civilized nation and be a credit to the colored race? I am free to say that I believe she will fulfill the latter condition and destiny. By one class of writers, however, such as Mr. Froude and his echoes, men and women who write what they know the prejudice of the hour will accept and pay for, this question has been vehemently answered already against Haiti and the possibilities of the negro race generally.

They tell us that Haiti is already doomed--that she is on the down-grade to barbarism; and, worse still, they affirm that when the negro is left to himself there or elsewhere, he inevitably gravitates to barbarism. Alas, for poor Haiti! and alas, for the poor negro everywhere, if this shall prove true!

The argument as stated against Haiti, is, that since her freedom, she has become lazy; that she is given to gross idolatry, and that these evils are on the increase. That voodooism, fetishism, serpent worship and cannibalism are prevalent there; that little children are fatted for slaughter and offered as sacrifices to their voodoo deities; that large boys and girls run naked through the streets of the towns and cities, and that things are generally going from bad to worse.

In reply to these dark and damning allegations, it will be sufficient only to make a general statement. I admit at once, that there is much ignorance and much superstition in Haiti. The common people there believe much in divinations, charms, witchcraft, putting spells on each other, and in the supernatural and miracle working power of their voodoo priests generally. Owing to this, there is a feeling of superstition and dread of each other, the destructive tendency of which cannot be exaggerated. But it is amazing how much of such darkness society has borne and can bear and is bearing without falling to pieces and without being hopelessly abandoned to barbarism.

Let it be remembered that superstition and idolatry in one form or another have not been in the past, nor are they in the present, confined to any particular place or locality, and that, even in our enlightened age, we need not travel far from our own country, from England, from Scotland, from Ireland, France, Germany or Spain to find considerable traces of gross superstition. We consult familiar spirits in America. Queen Victoria gets water from the Jordan to christen her children, as if the water of that river were any better than the water of any other river. Many go thousands of miles in this age of light to see an old seamless coat supposed to have some divine virtue. Christians at Rome kiss the great toe of a black image called St. Peter, and go up stairs on their knees, to gain divine favor. Here, we build houses and call them God's houses, and go into them to meet God, as if the Almighty dwelt in temples made with men's hands. I am not, myself, altogether free from superstition. I would rather sit at a table with twelve persons than at one with thirteen; and would rather see the new moon first over my right shoulder than over my left, though my reason tells me that it makes no manner of difference over which shoulder I see the new moon or the old. And what better is the material of one house than that of another?

Can man build a house more holy than the house which God himself has built for the children of men? If men are denied a future civilization because of superstition, there are others than the people of Haiti who must be so denied. In one form or another, superstition will be found

everywhere and among all sorts of people, high or low. New England once believed in witches, and yet she has become highly civilized.

Haiti is charged with the terrible crime of sacrificing little children to her voodoo gods, and you will want to know what I have to say about this shocking allegation. My answer is: That while I lived in Haiti I made diligent inquiry about this alleged practice so full of horror. I questioned many persons concerning it, but I never met a man who could say that he ever saw an instance of the kind; nor did I ever see a man who ever met any other man who said he had seen such an act of human sacrifice. This I know is not conclusive, for strange things have sometimes been done in the name of God, and in the practice of religion. You know that our good father Abraham (not Abraham Lincoln) once thought that it would please Jehovah to have him kill his son Isaac and offer him a sacrifice on the altar. Men in all ages have thought to gain divine favor of their divinities or to escape their wrath by offering up to them something of great and special value. Sometimes it was the firstlings of the flock, and sometimes it was the fat of fed beasts, fed for the purpose of having it nice and acceptable to the divine being. As if a divine being could be greatly pleased with the taste or smell of such offerings. Men have become more sensible of late. They keep, smell and eat their fat beef and mutton themselves.

As to the little boys and girls running nude in the streets, I have to say, that while there are instances of the kind, and more of them we, with the ideas of our latitude, would easily tolerate, they are nevertheless the exceptions to the general rule in Haiti. You will see in the streets of Port au Prince, one hundred decently dressed children to one that is nude; yet, our newspaper correspondents and six-day tourists in Haiti, would lead you to think that nudity is there the rule and decent clothing the exception. It should be remembered also, that in a warm climate like that of Haiti, the people consider more the comfort of their children in this respect than any fear of improper exposure of their little innocent bodies.

A word about snake worship. This practice is not new in the history of religion. It is as old as Egypt and is a part of our own religious system. Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness as a remedy for a great malady, and our Bible tells us of some wonderful things done by the serpent in the way of miraculous healing. Besides, he seems to have been on hand and performed marvelous feats in the Garden of Eden, and to have wielded a potent and mysterious influence in deciding the fate of mankind for time and eternity. Without the snake, the plan of salvation itself would not be complete. No wonder then that Haiti, having heard so much of the serpent in these respectable quarters and sublime relations, has acquired some respect for a divinity so potent and so ancient.

But the future of Haiti. What is it to be? Will it be civilization or barbarism? Will she remain an independent state, or be swallowed up by one or another of the great states? Whither is she tending? In considering these questions, we should allow no prejudice to influence us on the one hand or the other. If it be true that the Negro, left to himself, lapses into barbarism, as is alleged; the Negro above and beyond all others in the world should know it and should acknowledge it.

But it is said that the people of Haiti are lazy. Well, with the conditions of existence so easy and the performance of work so uninviting, the wonder is not that the men of Haiti are lazy, but that they work at all. But it is not true that the people of Haiti are as lazy as they are usually represented to be. There is much hard work done in Haiti, both mental and physical. This is true,

not only of accessible altitudes where the air is cool and bracing, but it is so in the low lands, where the climate is hot, parching and enervating. No one can see the ships afloat in the splendid harbors of Haiti, and see the large imports and exports of the country, without seeing also that somebody there has been at work. A revenue of millions does not come to a country where no work is done.

Plainly enough; we should take no snap judgment on a question so momentous. It should not be determined by a dash of the pen and upon mere appearances of the moment. There are ebbs and flows in the tide of human affairs, and Haiti is no exception to this rule. There have been times in her history when she gave promise of great progress, and others, when she seemed to retrograde. We should view her in the light broad light of her whole history, and observe well her conduct in the various vicissitudes through which she has passed. Upon such broad view I am sure Haiti will be vindicated.

It was once said by the great Daniel O'Connell, that the history of Ireland might be traced, like a wounded man through a crowd, by the blood. The same may be said of the history of Haiti as a free state. Her liberty was born in blood, cradled in misfortune, and has lived more or less in a storm of revolutionary turbulence. It is important to know how she behaved in these storms. As I view it, there is one great fundamental and soul-cheering fact concerning her. It is this: Despite all the trying vicissitudes of her history, despite all the machinations of her enemies at home, in spite of all temptations from abroad, despite all her many destructive revolutions, she has remained true to herself, true to her autonomy, and still remains a free and independent state. No power on this broad earth has yet induced or seduced her to seek a foreign protector, or has compelled her to bow her proud neck to a foreign government. We talk of assuming protectorate over Haiti. We had better not attempt it. The success of such an enterprise is repelled by her whole history. She would rather abandon her ports and harbors, retire to her mountain fastnesses, or burn her towns and shed her warm, red, tropical blood over their ashes than to submit to the degradation of any foreign yoke, however friendly. In whatever may be the sources of her shame and misfortune, she has one source of great complacency; she lives proudly in the glory of her bravely won liberty and her blood bought independence, and no hostile foreign foot has been allowed to tread her scared soil in peace from the hour of her independence until now. Her future autonomy is at least secure. Whether civilized or savage, whatever the future may have in store for her, Haiti is the black man's country, now forever. [Applause.]

In just vindication of Haiti, I can go one step further. I can speak of her, not only words of admiration, but words of gratitude as well. She has grandly served the cause of universal human liberty. We should not forget that the freedom you and I enjoy to-day; that the freedom that eight hundred thousand colored people enjoy in the British West Indies; the freedom that has come to the colored race the world over, is largely due to the brave stand taken by the black sons, of Haiti ninety years ago. When they struck for freedom, they builded better than they knew. Their swords were not drawn and could not be drawn simply for themselves alone. They were linked and interlinked with their race, and striking for their freedom, they struck for the freedom of every black man in the world. [Prolonged applause.]

It is said of ancient nations, that each had its special mission in the world and that each taught the world some important lesson. The Jews taught the world a religion, a sublime conception of the Deity. The Greeks taught the world philosophy and beauty. The Romans taught the world

jurisprudence. England is foremost among the modern nations in commerce and manufactures. Germany has taught the world to think, while the American Republic is giving the world an example of a Government by the people, of the people and for the people. [Applause.] Among these large bodies, the little community of Haiti, anchored in the Caribbean Sea, has had her mission in the world, and a mission which the world had much need to learn. She has taught the world the danger of slavery and the value of liberty. In this respect she has been the greatest of all our modern teachers.

Speaking for the Negro, I can say, we owe much to Walker for his appeal; to John Brown [applause] for the blow struck at Harper's Ferry, to Lundy and Garrison for their advocacy [applause], We owe much especially to Thomas Clarkson, [applause], to William Wilberforce, to Thomas Fowell Buxton, and to the anti-slavery societies at home and abroad; but we owe incomparably more to Haiti than to them all. [Prolonged applause.] I regard her as the original pioneer emancipator of the nineteenth century. [Applause.] It was her one brave example that first of all started the Christian world into a sense of the Negro's manhood. I was she who first awoke the Christian world to a sense of "the danger of goading too far the energy that slumbers in a black man's arm." [Applause.] Until Haiti struck for freedom, the conscience of the Christian world slept profoundly over slavery. It was scarcely troubled even by a dream of this crime against justice and liberty. The Negro was in its estimation a sheep like creature, having no rights which white men were bound to respect, a docile animal, a kind of ass, capable of bearing burdens, and receiving strips from a white master without resentment, and without resistance. The mission of Haiti was to dispel this degradation and dangerous delusion, and to give to the world a new and true revelation of the black man's character. This mission she has performed and performed it well. [Applause.]

Until she spoke no Christian nation had abolished negro slavery. Until she spoke no christian nation had given to the world an organized effort to abolish slavery. Until she spoke the slave ship, followed by hungry sharks, greedy to devour the dead and dying slaves flung overboard to feed them, ploughed in peace the South Atlantic painting the sea with the Negro's blood. Until she spoke, the slave trade was sanctioned by all the Christian nations of the world, and our land of liberty and light included. Men made fortunes by this infernal traffic, and were esteemed as good Christians, and the standing types and representations of the Saviour of the World. Until Haiti spoke, the church was silent, and the pulpit was dumb. Slavetraders lived and slave-traders died. Funeral sermons were preached over them, and of them it was said that they died in the triumphs of the christian faith and went to heaven among the just.

To have any just conception or measurement of the intelligence, solidarity and manly courage of the people of Haiti when under the lead of Toussaint L'Ouverture, [prolonged applause] and the dauntless Dessalines, you must remember what the conditions were by which they were surrounded; that all the neighboring islands were slaveholding, and that to no one of all these islands could she look for sympathy, support and co-operation. She trod the wine press alone. Her hand was against the Christian world, and the hand of the Christian world was against her. Her's was a forlorn hope, and she knew that she must do or die.

In Greek or Roman history nobler daring cannot be found. It will ever be a matter of wonder and astonishment to thoughtful men, that a people in abject slavery, subject to the lash, and kept in ignorance of letters, as these slaves were, should have known enough, or have had left in them

enough manhood, to combine, to organize, and to select for themselves trusted leaders and with loyal hearts to follow them into the jaws of death to obtain liberty. [Applause.]

In forecasting the future of this people, then, I insist that some importance shall be given to this and to another grand initial fact: that the freedom of Haiti was not given as a boon, but conquered as a right ! [Applause.] Her people fought for it. They suffered for it, and thousands of them endured the most horrible tortures, and perished for it. It is well said that a people to whom freedom is given can never wear it as grandly as can they who have fought and suffered to gain it. Here, as elsewhere, what comes easily, is liable to go easily. But what man will fight to gain, that, man will fight to maintain. To this test Haiti was early subjected, and she stood this test like pure gold. [Applause.]

To re-enslave her brave self-emancipated sons of liberty, France sent in round number's, to Haiti during the years 1802-1803, 50,000 of her veteran troops, commanded by the most experienced and skillful generals. History tells us what became of these brave and skillful warriors from France. It shows that they shared the fate of Pharaoh and his hosts. Negro manhood, Negro bravery, Negro military genius and skill, assisted by yellow fever and pestilence made short work of them. The souls of them by thousands were speedily sent into eternity, and their bones were scattered on the mountains of Haiti, there to bleach, burn and vanish under the fierce tropical sun. Since 1804 Haiti has maintained national independence. [Applause.] I fling these facts at the feet of the detractors of the Negro and of Haiti. They may help them to solve the problem of her future. They not only indicate the Negro's courage, but demonstrate his intelligence as well. [Applause.]

No better test of the intelligence of people can be had than is furnished in their laws, their institutions and their great men. To produce these in any considerable degree of perfection, a high order of ability is always required. Haiti has no cause to shrink from this test or from any other.

Human greatness is classified in three divisions: first, greatness of administration; second greatness of organization; and the third, greatness of discovery, the latter being the highest order of human greatness. In all three of these divisions, Haiti appears to advantage. Her Toussaint L'Ouvertures, her Dessalines, her Christophes, her Petions, her Reguad and others, their enemies being judges, were men of decided ability. [Applause.] They were great in all the three department of human greatness. Let any man in our highly favored country, undertake to organize an army of raw recruits, and especially let any colored man undertake to organize men of his own color, and subject them to military discipline, and he will at once see the hard task that Haiti had on hand, in resisting France and slavery, and be held to admire the ability and character displayed by her sons in making and managing her armies and achieving her freedom. [Applause.]

But Haiti did more than raise armies and discipline troops. She organized a Government and maintained a Government during eighty-seven years. Though she has been ever and anon swept by whirlwinds of lawless turbulence; though she has been shaken by earthquakes of anarchy at home, and has encountered the chilling blasts of prejudice and hate from the outside world, though she has been assailed by fire and sword, from without and within, she has, through all the machinations of her enemies, maintained a well defined civil government, and maintains it to-day. [Applause.] She is represented at all courts of Europe, by able men, and, in turn, she has representatives from all the nations of Europe in her capitol.

She has her judiciary, her executive and legislative departments. She has her house of representatives and her senate. All the functions of government have been, and are now being, regularly performed within her domain. What does all this signify? I answer. Very much to her credit. If it be true that all present, and all the future rests upon all the past, there is a solid ground to hope for Haiti. There is a fair chance that she may yet be highly progressive, prosperous and happy. [Applause.]

Those who have studied the history of civilization, with the largest range of observation and the most profound philosophical generalization, tell us that men are governed by their antecedents; that what they did under one condition of affairs they will be likely to do under similar conditions, whenever such shall arise. Haiti has in the past, raised many learned, able and patriotic men. She has made wise laws for own government. Among her citizens she has had scholars and statesmen, learned editors, able lawyers and eminent physicians. She has now, men of education in the church and in her government, and she is now, as ever, in the trend of civilization. She may be slow and halting in the race, but her face is in the right direction. [Applause.]

THE STATEMENT THAT SHE IS ON THE DOWN GRADE TO BARBARISM is easily made, but hard to sustain. It is not all borne out by my observation and experience while in that country. It is my good fortune to possess the means of comparison, as to "what Haiti was and what Haiti is;" what she was twenty years ago, and what she is now. I visited that country twenty years ago and have spent much time there since, and I have no hesitation in saying that, with all that I have said of her revolutions and defective civilization, I can report a marked and gratifying improvement in the condition of her people, now, compared with what it was twenty years ago. [Applause.]

IN PORT AU PRINCE, which may be taken as a fair expression of the general condition of the country, I saw more apparent domestic happiness, more wealth, more personal neatness, more attention to dress, more carriage rolling through the streets, more commercial activity, more schools, more well clothed and well cared for children, more churches, more teachers, more Sisters of Charity more respect for marriage, more family comfort, more attention to sanitary conditions, more and better water supply, more and better Catholic clergy, more attention to religious observances, more elegant residences, and more of everything desirable than I saw there twenty years ago. [Applause.]

AT THAT TIME HAITI was isolated. She was outside of telegraphic communication with the civilized world. She now has such connection. She has paid for a cable of her own and with her own money.

THIS HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED under the much abused President Hyppolite. [Applause.] Then, there was no effort to light any of the streets. Now, the main streets are lighted. The streets are full of carriages at night, but none are allowed to appear without lighted lamps, and every attention is given to the peace and good order of the citizens. There is much loud talk in Haiti, but blows are seldom exchanged between Haitians.

EVEN HER REVOLUTIONS are less sanguinary and ruthless now, than formerly. They have in many cases been attended with great disregard of private rights, with destruction of property and the commission of other crimes, but nothing of the kind was permitted to occur in the revolution

by which President Hyppolite, was raised to power. He was inaugurated in a manner as orderly as that inducing into office any President of the United States. [Applause.]

BEFORE WE DECIDE AGAINST THE probability of progress in Haiti, we should look into the history of the progress of other nations. Some of the most enlightened and highly civilized states of the world of to-day, were, a few centuries ago, as deeply depraved in morals, manners and customs, as Haiti is alleged to be now. Prussia, which is to-day the arbiter of peace and war in Europe and holds in her borders the profoundest thinkers of the nineteenth century, was, only three centuries ago, like Haiti, the theatre of warring factions, and the scene of flagrant immoralities. France, England, Italy and Spain have all gone through the strife and turmoil of factional war, the like of which now makes Haiti a by-word, and a hissing to a mocking earth. As they have passed through the period of violence, why may not Haiti do the same? [Applause.]

IT SHOULD ALSO BE REMEMBERED THAT HAITI IS STILL IN HER CHILDHOOD.

Given her time! Give her time!! While eighty years may be a good old age for a man, it can only be as a year in the life of a nation. With a people beginning a national life as Haiti did, with such crude material within, and such antagonistic forces operating upon her from without, the marvel is, not that she is far in the rear of civilization, but that she has survived in any sense as a civilized nation.

THOUGH SHE IS STILL AN INFANT, she is out of the arms of her mother. Though she creeps, rather than walks; stumbles often and sometimes falls, her head is not broken, and she still lives and grows, and I predict, will yet be tall and strong. Her wealth is greater, her population is larger, her credit is higher, her currency is sounder, her progress is surer, her statesmen are abler, her patriotism is nobler, and her government is steadier and firmer than twenty years ago. I predict that out of civil strife, revolution and war, there will come a desire for peace. Out of division will come a desire for union; out of weakness a desire for strength, out of ignorance a desire for knowledge, and out of stagnation will come a desire for progress. [Applause.] Already I find in her a longing for peace. Already she feels that she has had enough and more than enough of war. Already she perceives the need of education, and is providing means to obtain it on a large scale. Already she has added five hundred schools to her forces of education, within the two years of Hyppolite's administration. [Applause,] In the face of such facts; in the face of the fact that Haiti still lives, after being boycotted by all the Christian world; in the face of the fact of her known progress within the last twenty years in the face of the fact that she has attached herself to the car of the world's civilization, I will not, I cannot believe that her star is to go out in darkness, but I will rather believe that whatever may happen of peace or war Haiti will remain in the firmament of nations, and, like the star of the north, will shine on and shine on forever. [Prolonged applause.]

DEDICATION CEREMONIES

Of the Haitian Pavilion

The dedication of the Haitian Pavilion, located in the World's Fair Grounds, delivered Jan. 2, 1893, in the presence of a few of Chicago's best citizens. The short notice given to Director General Davis and the Public, is a startling occurrence and the cause of this will probably never be made public; and still another incident which occurred during the ceremonies, is that the ground was coated with snow, and there was every sign possible to indicate that a heavy rain would soon follow. the sun had not smiled upon us all that forenoon, but just two minutes before the speaker had concluded his remarks, the sun shorned forth its brilliancy directly in the eyes of the speaker who stood in a North-west position. The sun only showed forth one minute and a half, when the clouds crept over it and darkened it from us, the rest of the day. Addressing the audience Mr. Douglass said:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The first part of my mission here to-day is to speak a few words of this pavilion. In taking possession of it and dedicating it to the important purposes for which it has been erected within the grounds of the World's Columbian Exposition, Mr. Charles A. Preston and myself, as the Commissioners, appointed by the government of Haiti, to represent that government in all that belongs to such a mission in connection with the Exposition, wish to express our satisfaction with the work thus far completed. There have been times during the construction of this pavilion, when we were very apprehensive that its completion might be delayed to an inconvenient date. Solicitude on that point is now happily ended. The building which was once a thought is now a fact and speaks for itself. The vigor and punctuality of its builders are entitled to high praise. They were ready to give us possession before we were ready to accept it.

That some pains have been taken to have this pavilion in keeping with the place it occupies and to have it consistent with the character of the young nation it represents, is manifest. It is also equally manifest that it has been placed here at a considerable cost. The theory that the world was made out of nothing does not apply here. Material itself, it has required material aid to bring it into existence and to give it the character and completeness it possesses. It could not have been begun or finished without having behind it, the motive power of money, as well as the influence of an enlightened mind and a liberal spirit. It is no disparagement to other patriotic citizens of Haiti who have taken an interest in the subject of the World's Columbian Exposition, when I say, that we have found these valuable and necessary qualities pre-eminently embodied in the President of the Republic of Haiti. His Excellency General Hyppolite, has been the supreme motive power and the main-spring by which this pavilion has found a place in these magnificent grounds. The moment when his attention was called to the importance of having his country well represented in this Exposition he comprehended the significance of the fact and has faithfully and with all diligence endeavored to forward such measures as were necessary to attain this grand result. It is an evidence not only of the high intelligence of President Hyppolite, but also of the confidence reposed in his judgment by his country-men that this building has taken its place here, amid the

splendors and architectural wonders which have sprung up here as if by magic to dazzle and astonish the world. Whatever else may be said of President Hyppolite by his detractors he has thoroughly vindicated his sagacity and his patriotism by endeavoring to lead his country in the paths of peace, prosperity and glory. And as for herself, we may well say, that from the beginning of her national career until now, she has been true to herself and has been wisely sensible of her surroundings. No act of hers is more creditable than her presence here. She has never flinched when called by her right name. She has never been ashamed of her cause or of her color. Honored by an invitation from the government of the United States to take her place here, and be represented among the foremost civilized nations of the earth, she did not quail or hesitate. Her presence here to-day is a proof that she has the courage and ability to stand up and be counted in the great procession of our nineteenth century's civilization. [Applause]

Though this pavilion is modest in its dimensions and unpretentious in its architectural style and proportions, though it may not bear favorable comparison with the buildings of the powerful nations by which it is surrounded, I dare say, that it will not be counted in any sense unworthy of the high place which it occupies or of the people whose interests it represents. The nations of the Old World can count their years by thousand, their populations by millions and their wealth by mountains of gold. It was not to be expected that Haiti with its limited territory, its slender population and wealth could rival, or would try to rival here the splendors created by those older nations, and yet I will be allowed to say for her, that it was in her power to have erected a building much larger and finer than the one we now occupy. She has however, wisely chosen to put no strain upon her resources and has been perfectly satisfied to erect an edifice, admirably adapted to its uses and entirely respectable in its appearance. In this she has shown her good taste not less than her good sense. [Applause.]

For ourselves as Commissioners under whose supervision and direction this pavilion has been erected, I may say, that we feel sure that Haiti will heartily approve our work and that no citizen of that country shall visit the World's Columbian Exposition will be ashamed of its appearance, or will fail to look upon it and contemplate it with satisfied complacency. Its internal appointments are consistent with its external appearance. They bear the evidence of proper and thoughtful consideration for the taste, comfort and convenience of visitors, as well as for the appropriate display of the productions of the country which shall be here exhibited. Happy in these respects it is equally happy in another, Its location and situation are desirable. It is not a candle put under a bushel, but a city set upon a hill. [Applause.] For this we cannot too much commend the liberality of the honorable commissioners and managers of these grounds. They might have easily consulted the customs and prejudices unhappily existing in certain parts of our country, and relegated our little pavilion to an obscure and undesirable corner, but they have acted in the spirit of human brotherhood, and in harmony with the grand idea underlying this Exposition.

They have given us one of the very best sites which could have been selected. We cannot complain either of obscurity or isolation. We are situated upon one of the finest avenues of these grounds, standing upon our verandah we may view one of the largest of our inland seas, we may inhale its pure and refreshing breezes, we can contemplate its tranquil beauty in its calm and its awful sublimity and power when its crested billows are swept by the storm. The neighboring pavilions which surround us are the works and exponents of the wealth and genius of the greatest

nations on the earth. Here upon this grand high way thus located, thus elevated and thus surrounded, our unpretentious pavilion will be sure to attract the attention of multitudes from all the civilized countries on the globe, and no one of all of them who shall know the remarkable and thrilling events in the history of the brave people here represented, will view it with other than sympathy, respect and esteem. [Applause.]

Finally, Haiti, will be happy to meet and welcome her friends here. While the gates of the World's Columbian Exposition shall be open, the doors of this pavilion shall be open and a warm welcome shall be given to all who shall see fit to honor us with their presence. Our emblems of welcome will be neither brandy nor wine. No intoxicants will be served here, but we shall give all comers a generous taste of our Haitian coffee, made in the best manner by Haitian hands. They shall find it pleasant in flavor and delightful in aroma. Here, as in the sunny climes of Haiti, we shall do honor to that country's hospitality which permits no weary traveler to set foot upon her rich soil and go away hungry or thirsty. [Applause.] Whether upon her fertile plains or on the verdant sides of her incomparable mountains, whether in the mansions of the rich or in the cottages of the poor, the stranger is ever made welcome there to taste her wholesome bread, her fragrant fruits and her delicious coffee. [Applause.] It is proposed that this generous spirit of Haiti shall pervade and characterize this pavilion during all the day that Haiti shall be represented upon these ample grounds.

But gentlemen, I am reminded that on this occasion we have another important topic which should not be passed over in silence. We meet to-day on the anniversary of the independence of Haiti and it would be an unpardonable omission not to remember it with all honor, at this time and in this place [Applause.]

Considering what the environments of Haiti were ninety years ago; considering the antecedents of her people, both at home and in Africa; considering their ignorance, their weakness, their want of military training; considering their destitution of the munitions of war, and measuring the tremendous moral and material forces that confronted and opposed them, the achievement of their independence, is one of the most remarkable and one of the most wonderful events in the history of this eventful century, and I may almost say, in the history of mankind. Our American Independence was a task of tremendous proportions. In contemplation of it the boldest held their breath and many brave men shrank from it appalled. But as herculean, as was that task and dreadful as were the hardships and sufferings it imposed, it was nothing in its terribleness when compared with the appalling nature of the war which Haiti dared to wage for her freedom and her independence. Her success was a surprise and a startling astonishment to the world. [Applause.] Our war of the Revolution had a thousand years of civilization behind it. The men who led it were descended from statesmen and heroes. Their ancestry, were the men who had defied the powers of royalty and wrested from an armed and reluctant king the grandest declaration of human rights ever given to the world. [Applause.] They had the knowledge and character naturally inherited from long years of personal and political freedom. They belonged to the ruling race of this world and the sympathy of the world was with them. But far different was it with the men of Haiti. The world was all against them. They were slaves accustomed to stand and tremble in the presence of haughty masters. Their education was obedience to the will of others, and their religion was patience and resignation to the rule of pride and cruelty. As a race they stood before the world as the most abject, helpless and degraded of mankind. Yet from these men of the negro

race, came brave men, men who loved liberty more than life [Applause]; wisemen, statesmen, warriors and heroes, men whose deeds stamp them as worthy to rank with the greatest and noblest of mankind; men who have gained their freedom and independence against odds as formidable as ever confronted a righteous cause or its advocates. Aye, and they not only gained their liberty and independence, but they have never surrendered what they gained to any power on earth. [Applause.] This precious inheritance they hold to-day, and I venture to say here in the ear of all the world that they never will surrender that inheritance. [Prolonged Applause.]

Much has been said of the savage and sanguinary character of the warfare waged by the Haitians against their masters and against the invaders sent from France by Bonaparte with the purpose to enslave them; but impartial history records the fact, that every act of blood and torture committed by the Haitians during that war was more than duplicated by the French. The revolutionists did only what was essential to success in gaining their freedom and independence and what any other people assailed by such an enemy for such a purpose would have done. [Applause.]

They met deception with deception, arms with arms, harassing warfare with harassing warfare, fire with fire, blood with blood, and they never would have gained their freedom and independence if they had not thus matched the French at all points.

History will be searched in vain for a warrior, more humane, more free from the spirit of revenge, more disposed to protect his enemies, and less disposed to practice retaliation for acts of cruelty than General Toussaint L'Ouverture. [Prolonged Applause.] His motto from the beginning of war to the end of his participation in it, was protection to the white colonists and no retaliation of injuries. [Applause.] No man in the island had been more loyal to France, to the French Republic and to Bonaparte was fitting out a large fleet and was about to send a large army to Haiti to conquer and reduce his people to slavery he, like a true patriot and a true man determined to defeat his infernal intention by preparing for defense. [Applause.]

Standing on the heights of Cape Samana he with his trusted generals watched and waited for the arrival of one of the best equipped and most formidable armies ever sent against a foe so comparatively weak and helpless as Haiti then appeared to be. It was composed of veteran troops, troops that had seen service on the Rhine, troops that had carried French arms in glory to Egypt and under the shadow of the eternal pyramids. He had at last seen the ships of this powerful army one after another to the number of fifty-four vessels come within the waters of his beloved country.

Who will ever be able to measure the mental agony of this man, as he stood on those heights and watched and waited for this enemy to arrive, coming with fetters and chains for the limbs and slave whips for the backs of his people. What heart does not ache even in the contemplation of his misery.

It is not for me here to trace the course and particulars of the then impending conflict and tell of the various features of this terrible war; a conflict that must ever be contemplated with a shudder. That must be left to history, left to the quiet and patience of the study.

Like all such prolonged conflicts, the tide of battle did not always set in the favor of the right. Crushing disaster, bitter disappointment, intense suffering, grievous defections and blasted hopes were often the lot of the defenders of liberty and independence. The patience, courage and

fortitude with which these were borne, fully equals the same qualities exhibited by the armies of William the Silent, when contending for religious liberty against the superior armies of the Spanish Inquisition under Philip of Spain. It was more heroic in the brave Dutch people to defend themselves by the water of their dykes, than for the dusky sons of Haiti to defend their liberties by famine on their plains and fire on their mountains. The difference was simply the difference in color. True heroism is the same whether under one color or another, though men are not always sufficiently impartial to admit it. [Applause.]

The world will never cease to wonder at the failure of the French and the success of the blacks. Never did there appear a more unequal contest. The greatest military captain of the age backed by the most warlike nation in the world, had set his heart upon the subjugation of the despised sons of Haiti; he spared no pains and hesitated to employ no means however revolting to compass this purpose. Though he availed himself of bloodhounds from Cuba to hunt down and devour women and children; though he practiced fraud, duplicity and murder; though he scorned to observe the rules of civilized warfare; though he sent against poor Haiti his well-equipped and skillfully commanded army of fifty thousand men; though the people against whom his army came were unskilled in the arts of war; though by a treachery the most dishonorable and revolting the invaders captured and sent Toussaint L'Ouverture in chains to France to perish in an icy prison; though his swords were met with barrel hoops; though wasting war defaced and desolated the country for a dozen years--Haiti was still free! Her spirit was unbroken and her brave sons were still at large in her mountains ready to continue the war, if need be, for a century. [Applause.]

When Bonaparte had done his worst and the bones of his unfortunate soldiers whitened upon a soil made rich with patriot blood, and the shattered remnant of his army was glad to escape with its life, the heroic chiefs of Haiti in the year 1803 declared her INDEPENDENCE and she has made good that declaration down to 1893. [Prolonged applause] Her presence here to-day in the grounds of this World's Columbian Exposition at the end of the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the American Continent, it is a re-affirmation of her existence and independence as a nation, and of her place among the sisterhood of nations. [Applause.] Col. Davis Speaks. When Mr. Douglas has finished, Director-General Davis was called upon. He said among other things:

I am here to signify by my presence the appreciation of Exposition management of the gallant little republic which thus leads all the foreign nations in the matter of completing its stately pavillion as a general rendezvous on these grounds for its visiting citizens. It is not in this handsome building alone that Haiti will be fittingly represented at the Fair. Allotments have been made to it in the Departments of Agriculture, Mines and Mining, Forestry, and others. With a sagacity that is full of promise for the future, Haiti, is preparing to give an object lesson, teaching the abundance and variety of its natural resources that are only awaiting development.

Had we the time there is much in the past as well as in the future of Haiti that would be pleasant food for thought and speculation. We do not forget that to Haiti Columbus gave the name of Hispaniola, because it was looked on by him as the choicest fruit his discovery, as well for the beauty of its mountains, valleys, rivers and plains as for the superiority of its inhabitants. Its natives were a well-formed and spirited race of a gentle and peaceable disposition, "fairer and handsomer than the natives of the other islands." They were hospitable to a fault as the people are there to-day. "There is not in the world," wrote Columbus, "a better nation nor a better land."

But the fairest of lands may be made, as Columbus himself came to learn to his sorrow, a theatre for treachery and malevolent aspersion. The very men whom he had lead into this veritable Utopia conspired to destroy him in order that they might reap the fruits of his genius and build their fame and fortunes upon the ruins of his own; and they actually succeeded in sending him home in chains from a port of this beautiful island. But now, after four centuries have passed, his fame is secure while the names of his maligners are lost in merited oblivion.

Supplementary historical note

From Deborah Jenson, deborah.jenson@duke.edu, on the Corbett mail list, March 30, 2011:

There is a great deal of contemporaneous media coverage of Haiti at the 1892 World's Fair. The "Wisconsin Afro-American" of August 13, 1892 reported:

Haytian Commissioner Charles A. Preston Arrives to Arrange for the Exhibit

Charles A. Preston, the Haytian commission to the World's Fair, arrived in the city shortly before 12 o'clock last night, and is staying at the Richelieu. The commissioner brings with him plans of the building which Hayti intends erecting at Jackson Park. The plans have been approved by the native government; but before the construction can begin, it is necessary to have the endorsement of the chief of the Fair.

'We are deeply interested in showing the productions of our country,' he said, 'for many reasons. First of all, we were the first settlement established by Columbus; second, we were the second country to throw off the yoke of European control, and are therefore sisters of you Americans; third, we are a people of whom the world knows little, and we intend making ourselves known at Jackson Park.'

Eventually, Haiti was the first nation to complete its World Fair building. As an example of how broadly this was covered, here is an example from the North Dakota Bismarck Tribune on Feb. 14, 1893:

The honor of having completed the first building on the World's Fair grounds at Jackson Park, Chicago, belongs to the little, tumultuous, and blood-stained black republic of Hayti. It is a handsome structure and does honor to the farsightedness and public spirit of President Hippolyte. It cost \$30,000, and the money seems to have been quite well-expended.

Haiti was also featured in two different exhibits at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. First of all, it was the subject of a play in W.A. Seymour's "Black Booth." The "Freeman" noted the following on May 9, 1903:

The Negro in Drama at the World's Fair

W.A. Seymour, "Black Booth," America's greatest Negro exponent of the drama, who has had vast experience in the world theater, having given a number of noted dramatic exhibitions with great success [sic]. He is the promoter and manager of the Seymour and Harris Afro-American Theatrical Company, now being incorporated under the laws of South Dakota.

[....]

This powerful company will appear at the World's Fair in St. Louis, as a special feature of the Negro exhibits, presenting a \$10,000 production of Mr. A.L. Harris' great Negro drama, 'The Prince of Hayti.' The stage mounting of the play will be grand, leaving absolutely nothing which the theater-goers may wish for. This will doubtless be the greatest effort at colored theatricals ever attempted in America.

But did this grand production actually occur? That is less clear. Haiti was also, however, represented in a display of minerals and natural products--no doubt particularly amber. The "Morning Olympian" of May 12, 1904, gave a one-line summary of the Haitian exhibit:

Hayti is represented at the World's Fair with a display of mineral, wood, stone, and agricultural products and other articles showing the handiwork of the natives.

It may thus have been in the "Mines and Metallurgy Palace," since the note on Haiti is juxtaposed with news on Indiana's coal exhibit in that palace, and Idaho's rubies.

Why is there such a small role by Hayti, compared with its grand gesture in the 1892 Fair? One obvious reason is that there was explosive hostility toward American citizens and their property holdings and commercial ventures in Haiti in 1904. The "St. Louis Palladium" of Aug. 6, 1904, carried the following story:

American Citizens Stoned in Hayti

Port-au-Prince Populace Ignores Stars and Stripes. Great Disorder Prevailed. Minister Powell Went to the Palace and Demanded of President Norde that the Government Stop the Disorders

The city of Port-au-Prince is in a state of great disorder. Bands of soldiers throwing stones prevent the Syrians from reopening their stores. American citizens have hoisted the Stars and Stripes over their residences, and a number of them have sought refuge in the American legation, driving there in carriages flying the American flag and pursued by the populace throwing stones.

After the disorders of the morning, Minister Powell went to the palace and demanded of President Norde that the government should take immediate action to stop the disorders, and to protect all foreigners and their property, demanding especially that the American interests be protected.